



HOW TO BEGIN LIVING IN THE SOLUTION

A PUBLICATION OF RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS UNIVERSAL SERVICES
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R.A.'s NEWCOMER GUIDE

IN THIS GUIDE

R.A. Is Different:
R.A. Will Work For You
Page 1

The Preamble Of
Recoveries Anonymous
Page 1

Suggestions About How
To Get Started With R.A.
Page 2

The Results That
This Program Promises
Page 4

R.A.'s Suggestions
For The Daily Quiet Time
Page 6

A New Way Of Living
For Today And Every Day
Page 7

R.A.'s Suggestions
For What To Do As
You Go Through The Day
Page 7

Examples Of What To Do
As You Go Through The Day
Page 8

An Example Of
The Daily Quiet Time
Page 8

Information About
R.A.'s Newcomer Guide
Page 9

R.A. is
A Distinctive Program
Page 10

R.A.'s Declaration Of Ideals
Page 10

The Twelve Steps
Page 11

The Twelve Traditions
Page 11

How To Reach R.A.
Page 11

PLEASE KEEP THIS SPECIAL NEWCOMER GUIDE FOR DAILY REFERENCE

R.A. IS DIFFERENT

RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS WILL WORK FOR YOU!

Welcome to the Newcomer Guide of Recoveries Anonymous. R.A. is a Solution Focused Twelve Step Fellowship. It is especially for those who have yet to be successful in their search for recovery, as well as for those who have already found recovery.¹ R.A. is also for family and friends. We have found that, "*There is a solution.*"² It works for anyone, with any problem, or behavior. With the information and suggestions in this guide you can begin to work the Twelve Steps, the way the founders of the program originally intended. When we thoroughly follow their path using their "clear-cut directions,"³ we find that "a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."⁵ We recover!⁴

R.A. is Different!

R.A. focuses on the universal spiritual solution, in the Twelve Steps. Therefore, R.A. is open to everyone who desires to be a member, no matter what their problems, or behaviors may be. This includes family and friends.

R.A. uses the original "clear-cut directions"³

to work the Twelve Steps. These directions are much easier to see and follow in the Multilith Big Book. Therefore, we use it as our basic text.

Our goal is to be restored to sanity. We can then "react sanely and normally"⁶ in the same "situations which used to baffle us."⁷

R.A. will work for you!

Many people think that they need to be sober, abstinent, straight, happy, etc., before they can begin to work the Twelve Steps. In R.A., we recognize that all these, as well as the spiritual awakening, the restoration of sanity, and the recovery, come as the result of fully working all Twelve Steps.

The Twelve Steps are a recipe for recovery. Almost no one would expect to put in half the ingredients for a recipe, and have the desired result magically appear on the counter. In addition, most people would not try to make a recipe by repeatedly following the first three directions.

In R.A., we recognize that it is unreasonable to expect someone to get the same results from only working some of the Twelve Steps, as from working all Twelve Steps. That is why we will help you to work all Twelve Steps, using the pioneers' original "clear-cut directions."

There is a solution! Our experience is that if you work this program the way the pioneers originally designed it to work; you will duplicate their results. This program will work for you. It will *restore your sanity!* You will *recover!*

THE PREAMBLE OF RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS

RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS is a Solution Focused Twelve Step program. It is especially for those who, despite their best efforts, have yet to find the recoveries that they are looking for, as well as for those who have already found recovery. **R.A.** focuses on the universal spiritual solution, contained within the Twelve Steps. **R.A.** is therefore open to everyone who desires to be a member, no matter what their problems, or behaviors may be. This includes family and friends.

There are no dues, or fees, for membership in **R.A.** We are self-supporting through our own contributions. Our program has no affiliation with any other organization, institution, or doctrine, whether spiritual, religious, political, or social. **R.A.** does not wish to take part in any controversy or competition. We do not take a position on outside issues.

Our primary purpose is to carry our message of hope and sanity, to those who still suffer. Our function as a support group is to help people to recover, by working the Twelve Steps, in the way they were originally intended to work.

— EXPECT A MIRACLE —

Suggestions About How To Get Started With

A Simple Idea:

The foundation of R.A.'s program is a simple idea—that there is a loving, caring, all-powerful God. Do not be concerned if you do not presently believe in or accept this concept. Fully working all Twelve Steps of this program produces results. It is these results—*your own experiences*—that will lead you to believe. No matter what your past or present beliefs may be; you have the freedom—the right—to experiment⁸ with what we have found. A God who is “love, superhuman strength and direction”⁹—who “is concerned with us humans when we want Him enough”¹⁰—who will do “for us what we could not do for ourselves”¹¹—who will “restore us to sanity.”⁵

A Practical Program Of Action:

R.A. is a practical *spiritual* program of action. If you want the program to work for you, you need to immediately begin to work *it*. One of the earliest descriptions of the program says: “You admit you are licked; you get honest with yourself; you talk it out with somebody else; you make restitution to the people you have harmed; you try to give of yourself without stint, with no demand for reward; and you pray to whatever God you think there is, even as an experiment.”¹² You pray for the “power to practice these precepts.”¹³ These concepts, “broken up into smaller pieces,”¹⁴ now make up our Twelve Steps.

Progress Not Perfection:

Our program is “simple, but not easy.”¹⁵ You will learn it as you practice using it in your daily life. By *living* our way of life, you will become better at it. However, do not expect to do any aspect of it perfectly. None of us work this program perfectly, and we have still recovered. “We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.”¹⁶ To duplicate what we have found you “must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen.”¹⁷

Getting Started:

The first thing to do to start working the R.A. program is to pray; even if you do not believe in God, or in the power of prayer—pray! Second, use the “Suggestions For The Daily Quiet Time,”¹⁸ on page 6 of this guide. For examples of how to follow these suggestions, refer to “An Example Of The Daily Quiet Time,” on page 8 of this guide. Even if you already devote a part of your day to religious observance, or to prayer and meditation, follow these suggestions in addition. Some people call “The Daily Quiet Time,” “The Morning Quiet Time.” However, experience has shown that the time of day you do it is not important. Some of us even split it into morning and evening sessions. What *is* important is to fully work all Twelve Steps. This means to consistently make having a “Daily Quiet Time” a priority in your day.

Getting Results:

As you pray and meditate, as you take the actions needed to work all Twelve Steps, it is important that you also *try* to start behaving sanely and normally. For example, if you are eating, drinking, gambling, smoking, spending, working, using, abusing, feeling depressed, dependent, etc., to a harmful extreme—*pray!* If someone is hurting you—*pray!* Especially at the moment of temptation—*pray!* Ask God to do for you what you have proved you can't do for yourself. Ask God to restore you to sanity so that you can react sanely and normally in the same situations that used to baffle you. Pray for this so that you can bear witness to those you would help of God's power, love, and way of life. However, you won't know God's answer unless you also *try* to behave sanely. This is very different from the self-reliant, self-centered trying that didn't work in the past, because you are now throwing the responsibility for success upon God. Trust in this process. Trust that God *is* helping you. Keep on in this way, no matter how many times it may seem to fail. If you persist you will find, as you work all Twelve Steps, that you will, sooner or later, start reacting sanely and normally; and, if you continue to work this program each day for the rest of your life, you will find that your restoration to sanity—your recovery, will be permanent.

Sponsorship:

Within R.A., working with others is a vital part of the recovery *process*. In R.A., sponsors and sponsored meet as equals. They call each other “friend.”¹⁹ There is no separate class or caste of sponsors. Therefore, for someone to become a sponsor within R.A., there are only two requirements. These are the desire to recover, and the need to help others. Ask someone to be your sponsor as soon as possible—working with you is vital to *his* or *her* recovery. Working with others is vital to *your* recovery. Become a sponsor and get a sponsor immediately. Within R.A., “Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery.”²⁰

The Welfare Of Others:

An important part of your recovery process is to begin to “place the welfare of other people ahead of [your] own.”²¹ The full implementation of the Twelve Steps has restored us to sanity. Therefore, even those of us who had a problem with “people pleasing,” trust that we will now help others sanely, based upon God's direction and guidance. This is very different from our past attempts to control, manipulate, and obligate others by doing things for them. One of our books reminds us that placing the welfare of others ahead of our own “is the ceaseless and anonymous triumph of a truly loving spirit. ‘I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.’”²²

Recoveries Anonymous

Meetings:

Fully working all Twelve Steps will produce your recovery. However, frequent attendance at R.A. Discussions is vital to the full development and maintenance of your recovery. Therefore, attend, participate in, and do service at as many R.A. Discussions as you can go to. This will help to take the focus off your problems. It will let you help others, and fulfill your obligation to be there “for the sake of the new man or woman who might walk through that door.”²³ Sometimes the existing R.A. Discussions are not convenient. If you would like to attend more meetings than are currently available in your area, please go to R.A.’s web site. You can download R.A.’s free Start A Group Kit. It contains all you will need to start an R.A. Group and hold R.A. Meetings.

Introducing Ourselves:

The Big Book says that we should each introduce ourselves “as a person who has recovered.”²⁴ In R.A. we use the term “recovered” as a statement of fact. We also use it as a statement of hope. In other words—we use it as a positive affirmation of God’s power to restore us to sanity. Therefore, many of us, even newcomers, introduce ourselves as having “*recovered, by God’s grace,²⁵ through this Twelve Step program of recovery.*” Others introduce themselves as “*living in the solution, by God’s grace, through this Twelve Step program of recovery.*” Both introductions give credit to God as the source of our recoveries. They acknowledge the Twelve Steps as the method by which we recovered. They also let others know that *we are living in the solution rather than in the problem.*

Anonymity:

Within R.A., we use the original concept of anonymity.²⁶ This means that there is only one time it is *not* appropriate to use our *full* names. This is at the public level of press, radio, television and films. For example, if an R.A. member appears on, or is quoted in, any public media, while talking about R.A., they should not use their full name. However, R.A. members do not need to be anonymous when talking: among ourselves, with friends and family, at R.A. Meetings, or before public or semipublic gatherings.

Confidentiality:

Within R.A., you have a right to expect that anything you share in confidence will remain private. No one has the right to repeat anything you say, without your permission.²⁷ This includes your sponsor. Remember that you have the same responsibility. You cannot repeat anything shared in confidence with you. However, keep in mind that many people who attend our meetings are there because they are not well. They may not respect your privacy. Therefore, at our meetings, we suggest that you share your experiences with, and understanding of, the spiritual solution that is in our books. Only share the intimate, personal details of your life on a one to one basis, with someone you trust.

Family And Friends:

Within R.A., we welcome, even encourage, family and friends, to join in every aspect of our Twelve Step Program of Recovery. Experience has shown that there are many benefits for us, and for them. When the people in our life have the *option* of joining in the practice of our program, and of attending our meetings, they can feel included instead of excluded. They often become supportive. They don’t feel threatened by something they don’t understand. They often need and benefit from working our program in their own lives. Within R.A., we don’t stay away from our problems and behaviors—we grow away from them. “And if our spouses [and friends] don’t grow along with us, we grow away from them.”²⁸

Bearing Witness:

Within R.A., when talking to a group, we suggest that you not go into detail about your problems,²⁹ your behaviors, or your life. Most of us already know how to hurt ourselves, and others. We are here to learn how to become, and stay sane. Therefore, we suggest that you try to “bear witness”³⁰ or give “testimony”³¹ about the *solution* that is in our literature. This simply means to give a personal report of your life before this program, how working the Twelve Steps restored your sanity, and how your life has changed since your recovery. Do not preach or lecture. Your sharing should be personal. Talk about you and your recovery. If you are new to our program, talk about you and your understanding of the pioneers’ recovery as detailed in our literature.

Sharing:

When sharing, the ideal is that no one feels preached to or at, and yet they hear what they need to know so that they can become and stay sane. We suggest that you try to share so that people can *apply* what you say. We can also suggest several ways to increase the effectiveness of your sharing: When talking to a group, try to address the entire group. Do not single out an individual. Do not use members’ names. Do not tell anyone what *he or she* should do. Simply share what *you* do. For example, try to avoid the use of “us,” “we,” or “you,” in your sharing. Saying “the Big Book tells *me* that if *I* want to get well, *I* need to work the program,” is far more effective than saying “the Big Book tells *us* that if *we* want to get well, *we* need to work the program,” or “if *you* want to get well, *you* need to work the program.”

1. Big Book, Title page, pg. xiii, first para., pg. 17, first para., pg. 29, first para., and pg. 132 second para.
2. Big Book, pg. 17, and pg. 25, first paragraph.
3. Big Book, pg. 29, top paragraph.
4. Big Book, pg. xvii, top paragraph, also see page v, bottom paragraph 64, and page 169, fourth para.
5. Big Book, pg. 59, Second Step.
6. Big Book, pg. 85, top paragraph.
7. Big Book, pg. 84, top paragraph.
8. A.A. Comes of Age, pg. 59, top paragraph, pg. 63, top paragraph, pg. 264, first and second paragraph.
9. Big Book, pg. 10, fourth paragraph.
10. Big Book, pg. 12, fifth paragraph.
11. Big Book, pg. 84, top para., also see pg. 11, third para., pg. 25 second para., pg. 70 bottom para.
12. A.A. Comes of Age, pg. 62, bottom paragraph.
13. A.A. Comes of Age, pg. 160, fourth paragraph.
14. A.A. Comes of Age, pg. 161, first and second para.
15. Big Book, pg. 14, first paragraph.

16. Big Book, pg. 60, second paragraph.
17. Big Book, pg. 100, first paragraph.
18. Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers, pg. 150, bot. para., and pg. 178, third and fourth para.
19. BB, pg. 92, bot. para., and pg. 94, first para.
20. Big Book, pg. 97, first paragraph.
21. Big Book, pg. 94, first paragraph.
22. The Greatest Thing In The World, pg. 22.
23. Dr. Bob..., pg. 334, first paragraph.
24. Big Book, pg. 90, third paragraph.
25. Dr. Bob..., pg. 222, second and third para.
26. Dr. Bob... Good Oldtimers, pgs. 264-265, and Language of the Heart, pgs. 15, 18-19.
27. Big Book, pg. 125, first and second para.
28. Lois Remembers, pg. 168, sixth paragraph.
29. Dr. Bob..., pg. 140, bot., through pg. 141, second para., and pg. 222, bottom paragraph.
30. Big Book, pg. 63, second paragraph.
31. Big Book, pg. 55, fourth paragraph.

The Results That This Program Promises

Each of the following passages is a quote from the Multilith Copy of the Big Book. Each quote contains some of the results promised to those who work our program. For details please read the article "Information About This Newcomer Guide" on page 9 of this guide.

1. We found that as soon as we were able to lay aside prejudice and¹

- A. express even a willingness to believe in a Power greater than ourselves,
- B. **we commenced to get results**, even though it was impossible for any of us to fully define or comprehend that Power, which is God.

2. Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our directions.²

- A. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program,
- B. usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves.

3. This is the how and why of it.³

- A. First of all, quit playing God yourself. It doesn't work.
- B. Next, decide that hereafter in this drama of life, God is going to be your Director.
 - 1. He is the Principal; **you are to be His agent**.
 - 2. He is the Father, and **you are His child**.
 - a. Get that simple relationship straight.
 - b. Most good ideas are simple, and this concept is to be the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which **you will pass to freedom**.

4. When you sincerely take such a position, all sorts of remarkable things follow.⁴

- A. You have a new Employer.
- B. Being all powerful, He must necessarily provide what you need, if you
 - 1. keep close to Him and
 - 2. perform His work well.
- C. Established on such a footing **you become less and less interested in yourself, your little plans and designs**.
- D. More and more you become interested in seeing what you can contribute to life.
 - 1. As you feel new power flow in,
 - 2. as you enjoy peace of mind,
 - 3. as **you discover you can face life successfully**,
 - 4. as **you become conscious of His presence**, you begin to lose your fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter. You will have been reborn.

5. Self-reliance was good as far as it went, but it didn't go far enough. Some of us once had great self-confidence, but it didn't fully solve the fear problem, or any other. When it made us cocky, it was worse.⁵

- A. Perhaps there is a better way—we think so.
 - 1. For **you are now to go on a different basis**;
 - 2. the basis of trusting and relying upon God.
- B. **You are to trust infinite God** rather than your finite self.
 - 1. **You are in the world to play the role He assigns**.
 - 2. **Just to the extent that you do as you think He would have you, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable you to match calamity with serenity**.

6. You must never apologize to anyone for depending upon your Creator.⁶

- A. **You can laugh at those who think spirituality the way of weakness**.
- B. Paradoxically, it is the way of strength.
 - 1. The verdict of the ages is that faith means courage.

The Promises⁷

If you are painstaking about this phase of your development [making amends as part of the Ninth Step], you will be amazed before you are half [way] through.

1. **You are going to know a new freedom and happiness.**
2. **You will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.**
3. **You will comprehend the word serenity and know peace.**
4. **No matter how far down the scale you have gone, you will see how your experience can benefit others.**
5. **That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear.**
6. **You will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in your fellows.**
7. **Self-seeking will slip away.**
8. **Your whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.**
9. **Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave you.**
10. **You will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle you.**
11. **You will suddenly realize that God is doing for you what you could not do for yourself.**
12. **You say these are extravagant promises. They are not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize in you if you work for them.**

- 2. All men of faith have courage.
- 3. They trust their God.
- C. Never apologize for God.
 - 1. Instead let Him demonstrate, through you, what He can do.
 - 2. Ask Him to remove your fear and direct your attention to what He would have you be.
 - 3. At once, **you will commence to outgrow fear**.

To Those Who Work It

7. Much has already been said about receiving strength, inspiration, and direction from Him who has all knowledge and power.⁹

- A. If you have carefully followed directions,
1. you have begun to sense the flow of His Spirit into you.
 2. To some extent you have become God-conscious.
 3. You have begun to develop this vital sixth sense.
- B. But you must go further and that means more action.

8. The kick you will get is tremendous.¹⁰

- A. To watch people come back to life,
1. to see them help others,
 2. to watch loneliness vanish,
 3. to see a fellowship grow up about you,
 4. to have a host of friends—
 - a. this is an experience you must not miss.
 - b. We know you will not want to miss it.
- B. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.

9. Both you and the new prospect must day by day walk in the path of spiritual progress.¹¹

- A. If you persist, remarkable things will happen to you.
- B. When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better for us than anything we could have planned.
- C. Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!

10. You will make mistakes,¹²

- A. but if you are in earnest they will not drag you down.
- B. Instead, you will capitalize them. [You will turn your mistakes into assets.]
- C. A better way of life will emerge when they are overcome.

11. Your imagination will be fired.¹³

- A. Life will mean something at last.
- B. The most satisfactory years of your existence lie ahead.
- C. Thus we find The Fellowship, and so will you.

12. Among [us] you will make lifelong friends.¹⁴

- A. You will be bound to them with new and wonderful ties, for
1. you will escape disaster together and
 2. you will commence shoulder to shoulder your common journey.
- B. Then you will know what it means to give of yourself that others may survive and rediscover life.
- C. You will learn the full meaning of "Love thy neighbor as thyself."

13. Abandon yourself to God as you understand God.¹⁵

- A. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows.
- B. Clear away the wreckage of your past.

- C. Give freely of what you find and join us.
1. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of The Spirit, and
 2. you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny.

14. May God bless you and keep you—until then.¹⁶

The "Hidden" Promises⁸

1. Love and tolerance of others is your code.
2. And you have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even [your problems and behaviors].
3. For by this time your sanity will have returned.
4. You will seldom be interested in [hurting yourself or others].
5. If tempted, you will recoil from it as you would from a hot flame.
6. You will react sanely and normally. You will find this has happened automatically.
7. You will see that your new attitude toward [your problems and behaviors] has been given you without any thought or effort on your part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it.
8. You are not fighting it, neither are you avoiding temptation.
9. You feel as though you had been placed in a position of neutrality. You feel safe and protected.
10. You have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for you.
11. You are neither cocky nor are you afraid.
12. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.

1. Multi. Big Book, pg. 21, first paragraph.

2. Multi. Big Book, pg. 26, first paragraph.

3. Multi. Big Book, pg. 28, third paragraph.

4. Multi. Big Book, pg. 28, fourth paragraph.

5. Multi. Big Book, pg. 30, eighth paragraph.

6. Multi. Big Book, pg. 31, second paragraph.

7. Multi. Big Book, pg. 38, third & fourth para.

8. Multi. Big Book, pg. 38, fifth & sixth para.

9. Multi. Big Book, pg. 39, second paragraph.

10. Multi. Big Book, pg. 41, second paragraph.

11. Multi. Big Book, pg. 45, seventh paragraph.

12. Multi. Big Book, pg. 54, second paragraph.

13. Multi. Big Book, pg. 70, fifth paragraph.

14. Multi. Big Book, pg. 70, seventh paragraph.

15. Multi. Big Book, pg. 75, bottom paragraph.

16. Multi. Big Book, pg. 76, first paragraph.

R.A.'s Suggestions For The Daily Quiet Time

The following directions are quotes from pages 38 through 40 and paragraph eight of page 75 in R.A.'s Multilith Copy of the Big Book. This is the equivalent of pages 84 through 88 and paragraph two from page 164 in A.A.'s Big Book. Read the article on page 9 of this guide for more "Information About This Newcomer Guide." Please see the examples on page 8 for our suggestions of how to use these directions.

1. If circumstances warrant, ask your wife [husband] or a friend to join you in morning meditation.

- A. If you belong to a religious denomination which requires a definite morning [or daily] devotion, be sure to attend to that also.
- B. If you are not a member of a religious body, you might select and memorize a few set prayers which emphasize the principles we have been discussing. [We suggest the Third Step Prayer from page 63 in the Big Book, and the Seventh Step Prayer from page 76 in the Big Book.]
- C. There are many helpful books also.
 - 1. If you do not know of any, ask your priest, minister, or rabbi, for suggestions.
 - 2. Be quick to see where religious people are right.
 - 3. Make use of what they offer.

Step Eleven

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

2. Step eleven suggests prayer and meditation.

- A. Don't be shy on this matter of prayer.
- B. Better men [and women] than we are using it constantly.
- C. It works, if you have the proper attitude and work at it.

3. It would be easy to be vague about this matter. Yet, we believe we can give you some definite and valuable suggestions.

- A. When you awake tomorrow morning, [or at whatever time you decide to consistently have your Daily Quiet Time] look back over the day before. [Ask yourself these questions.]
 - 1. Were you resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?
 - 2. Do you owe an apology?
 - 3. Have you kept something to yourself which should be discussed with another person at once?
 - 4. Were you kind and loving toward all?
 - 5. What could you have done better?
 - 6. Were you thinking of yourself most of the time?
 - 7. Or were you thinking of what you could do for others,
 - 8. of what you could pack into the stream of life?
- B. *But [you] must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish [your] usefulness to others.*
- C. After you have faced yesterday,
 - 1. ask God's forgiveness for any wrong.
 - 2. Ask [God] to be shown what to do [to make amends for these wrongs] *and inquire what corrective measures should be taken* [so that you do not repeat these same wrongs in the future].
- D. Thus you keep clean as you live each day.

4. Next, think about the twenty-four hours ahead.

- A. Consider your plans for the day.
- B. Before you begin,
 - 1. ask God to guide your thinking.
 - 2. Especially ask that [your thinking] be divorced from
 - a. self-pity,
 - b. dishonest or
 - c. self-seeking motives.
- C. Then go ahead and use your common sense.
 - 1. There is nothing hard or mysterious about this.
 - 2. God gave you brains to use.
- D. [Let God clear] your thinking of wrong motives [by praying in this way]. Your thought life will [then] be placed on a much higher plane.

5. In thinking through your day you may face indecision.

- A. You may not be able to determine which course to take.
 - 1. Here you ask God for
 - a. inspiration,
 - b. an intuitive thought or
 - c. a decision.
 - 2. Relax and take it easy.
 - 3. Don't struggle.
 - 4. Ask God's help.
- B. You will be surprised how the right answers come after you have practiced a few days.
- C. What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration *gradually* becomes a working part of your mind.
 - 1. Being still inexperienced and just making your contact with God, it is not probable that you are going to be divinely inspired all the time.
 - 2. That would be a large piece of conceit, for which you might pay in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas.
- D. Nevertheless, you will find that your thinking will, as time passes,
 - 1. be more and more on the plane of inspiration and guidance.
 - 2. You will come to rely upon it.

6. Ask Him in your [daily] meditation what you can do each day for the man who is still sick.

- A. The answers will come,
 - 1. if your own house is in order.
 - 2. But obviously you cannot transmit something you haven't got.
- B. See to it that your relationship with Him is right, and
 - 1. great events will come to pass for you and countless others.
 - 2. This is the Great Fact for us.

7. You might conclude the period of meditation with a prayer

- A. that you be shown all through the day what your next step is to be,
- B. that He give you whatever you need to take care of every situation.
- C. Ask especially for freedom from self-will.
- D. Be careful to make no request for yourself only.
 - 1. You may ask for yourself, however, if others will be helped.
 - 2. Never pray for your own selfish ends.
 - a. People waste a lot of time doing that, and it doesn't work.
 - b. You can easily see why.

R.A.'s New Way Of Living For Today And Every Day

The goal of working our program is to produce a vital spiritual experience that will restore us to sanity. We do this by following the original “clear-cut directions”¹ that are in the Multilith Big Book. We use them to fully work all Twelve Steps. The suggestions and directions in this Newcomer Guide will help you to get started.

These “vital spiritual experiences... appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements. Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of [your life] are suddenly [or gradually] cast to one side, and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate [you].”²

In other words, our program will lead you to a “new way of living.”³ This is a “manner of living which demands rigorous honesty,”⁴ it also “depends upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs.”⁵

Retain this guide. Read it and reread it until the suggestions and directions in it become an integral, essential part of your daily life. Quickly move on and fully work all Twelve Steps of the program. Join us in our “Fellowship of the Spirit.”⁶ “We are sure that our new way of living has its advantages for all.”³

1. Big Book, pg. 29, first paragraph. 2. Big Book, pg. 27, fourth paragraph. 3. Multilith . Big Book, Foreword, First para. 4. Big Book, pg. 58, first paragraph. 5. Big Book, pg. 20, top paragraph. 6. Big Book, pg. 164, third paragraph.

R.A.'s Suggestions For What To Do As You Go Through The Day

*Step Ten
Continued to take personal inventory
and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*

8. This thought brings us to step ten,

- A. which suggests:
 - 1. you continue to take personal inventory and
 - 2. continue to set any new mistakes right as you go along.
- B. You vigorously commenced this way of life as you cleaned up your past.
- C. You have entered the world of [the] Spirit.
- D. Your next function is to grow in understanding and effectiveness.
 - 1. This is not an overnight matter.
 - 2. It should continue for your lifetime.
- E. Continue to watch yourself for selfishness [and any of its hundred manifestations, such as]:
 - 1. dishonesty,
 - 2. resentment, and
 - 3. fear.
- F. When these crop up,
 - 1. ask God at once to remove them.
 - 2. Discuss them with someone immediately.
 - 3. Make amends quickly if you have harmed anyone.
 - 4. Then resolutely turn your thoughts to someone you can help.
 - 5. Love and tolerance of others is your code.

9. It is easy to let up on the spiritual program of action and rest on your laurels.

- A. You are headed for trouble if you do, for [our problems and behaviors are] a subtle foe.
- B. We are not cured of [our problems and behaviors].
- C. What we really have is a daily reprieve *contingent on the maintenance of [your fit] spiritual condition.*

10. Every day is a day when you have to carry the vision of God's will into all of your activities.

- A. “How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done.”
 - 1. These are thoughts which must go with you constantly.
 - 2. You can exercise your will power along this line all you wish.
- B. [Thinking these thoughts] is the proper use of the will.

11. As you go through the day pause, when agitated or doubtful.

- A. Be still and ask [God] for the right thought or action. It will come.
- B. *Constantly* remind yourself you are no longer running the show.
- C. Humbly say to yourself many times each day “Thy will be done.”
 - 1. You will be in much less danger of [experiencing] excitement, fear, anger, worry, self-pity, or foolish decisions.
 - 2. You will become much more efficient.
 - 3. You will not tire easily, for you will not be burning up energy foolishly as you did when trying to arrange life to suit yourself.
- D. It works—it really does.
- E. Try it.

12. We...are undisciplined.

- A. So let God discipline you in the simple way we have just outlined.
- B. But this is not all.
 - 1. There is action and more action. “Faith without works is dead.”
 - 2. What works? We shall treat them in the next chapter [“Working With Others”] which is entirely devoted to [directions for this essential part of the recovery process] step twelve.

R.A.'s Examples of

What To Do As You Go Through The Day

God, please remove my selfishness and all its manifestations such as: dishonesty, resentment, and fear. Let me quickly talk to someone so that I can see whether I have harmed anyone. If I have, please guide me to make my amends quickly.

God, please help me to resolutely turn my thoughts to someone I can help. Let me use love and tolerance of others as my code.

God, I pray that I not let up on this spiritual program of action. Always let me remember that I am not cured of my problems or behaviors. Never let me forget that my recovery is contingent upon the maintenance of my fit spiritual condition.

God, I pray to carry the vision of Your will into all my activities, every day. “How can I best serve Thee—Thy will (not mine) be done.” I pray that these thoughts go with me constantly.

God, I pray that You grant me the grace to be still whenever I am agitated or doubtful; that You give me the right thought or action. I pray to constantly remember that I am no longer running the show. I pray to humbly say to myself, many times each day, “Thy will be done.”

God, I pray that You discipline me by having me follow Your program as the pioneers outlined it. I pray to always remember that, “Faith without works is dead”; that I need to carry this program's message to others who still suffer.

R.A.'s Example Of

The Daily Quiet Time

“God, I offer myself to Thee—to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!”

“My Creator, I am now willing that You should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that You now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to You and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do Your bidding. Amen.”

God, please show me, during the last Twenty-four hours:

1. Was I resentful, selfish, dishonest or afraid?
2. Do I owe an apology?
3. Have I kept something to myself, which should be discussed with another person at once?
4. Was I kind and loving toward all?
5. What could I have done better?
6. Was I thinking of myself most of the time?
7. Or was I thinking of what I could do for others,
8. of what I could pack into the stream of life?

God, please let me be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish my usefulness to others.

God, please forgive me for any wrong. Please show me what to do to make amends and what corrective measures to take so that I do not repeat these same wrongs in the future.

God, as I consider my plans for the day, please clear my thinking of wrong motives. I especially ask that my thinking be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives.

God, I have a problem [say what it is]. I do not know which course to take, please grant me an inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. God, please help me.

God, I pray that You show me all through the day what my next step is to be, that You give me whatever I need to take care of every situation. I ask especially for freedom from self-will.

God, please show me what I can do each day for those who are still sick.

God, I pray to be careful to make no request for myself only, to remember that I may ask for myself; if what I ask for will also help others.

God, all things are possible to You; therefore, if it be Thy will, and if what I am asking for will also help others, please grant [say your request at this time]. Nevertheless, Thy will, not mine, be done in this as in all things. Amen.

Information

About R.A.'s Newcomer Guide

The promises directions in this Newcomer Guide are from the *Multilith Copy of the Big Book*. The Multilith is the first group conscience approved version of the Big Book. It contains the pioneers' original "clear-cut directions" for working the Twelve Steps. It is the instruction manual we use to work the program.

Writing the Big Book was an elaborate affair. Bill Wilson, one of the co-founders of the program, would prepare a draft of a chapter.

He would read it to the New York group. Then he would send it to Dr. Bob, another

co-founder, in Akron. Dr. Bob would show the draft to several Akron members and then to the Akron Group. Bill would then have his secretary, Ruth Hock retype each chapter, making changes to reflect any criticisms and suggestions.

This complicated process went on until they agreed to the wording of each chapter. Finally, the group conscience voted to approve the full text of the manuscript.

They made four hundred copies of this typewritten manuscript. A company named "Multilith" probably made the mimeograph machine they used to print it. Therefore, they called the original typewritten manuscript, the *Multilith Copy of the Big Book*.

They gave the four hundred copies to members of the fellowship, and to friends in the fields of medicine and religion, for comments. They received many suggestions, but two were of special importance.

Dr. Howard, a well-known psychiatrist from Montclair, New Jersey, suggested that the text contained too many references to the words "you" and "must." He believed that people would react negatively to what they might perceive as coercion. He therefore suggested that the terms "we ought" or "we should" replace these words. This would place the program on a suggested, rather than a "must," basis.

The Catholic Committee on Publications in the New York Archdiocese reviewed the manuscript. They made some suggestions for improvements in the section dealing

with prayer and meditation. They also suggested that the reference to Heaven at the end of "Bill's Story," be changed to Utopia. A.A. adopted these suggestions.

Early in 1939 the manuscript was ready to bring to the printer. In *A.A. Comes of Age*, on page 169, in the second full paragraph, Bill describes how he and Henry used a copy of the *Multilith* to prepare the "printer's copy" for what was to become the *Big Book*: "We selected one of the mimeographs, and in Henry's clear handwriting all the corrections were transferred to it. There were few large changes but the small ones were very numerous."

Our experience is that it is much easier to see, and follow the directions for working the Twelve Steps, in the original group conscience-approved Multilith. Therefore, R.A. has gone back to it for the quotes used in this guide. To clarify each instruction further, we have placed the text in outline form. In addition, we have rearranged some paragraphs, placing them in a more logical order for use in this guide.

To make things even clearer, where necessary, we have added our own comments [enclosed by brackets]. We have also added text from the current Big Book. We have printed this text in *italics*. We have corrected the spelling and punctuation by referring to the current Big Book.

It is also important to understand that the pioneers did not intend for someone to work the Twelve Steps

sequentially

—one after the other. If they had, it would mean that someone would not

be able to pray and meditate (Step Eleven) until after they had completed the first ten steps. Instead, they designed the Twelve Steps to all be worked together. The Twelve Steps are all interrelated and interwoven.

Please remember that it will be your full implementation of all Twelve Steps, using the directions in the Big Book that will produce your full recovery. This guide is only a beginning. Quickly move on and work the rest of the Twelve Steps. If you fully work this program, you will recover!

The Multilith contains the original "clear-cut directions" for working the Twelve Steps

The Twelve Steps are all designed to be interrelated and interwoven

Recoveries Anonymous is A Distinctive Program

R.A. is a distinctive Fellowship. It is especially for those who, despite their best efforts, have yet to find the recoveries that they are looking for. It is also for those who have already found recovery. *R.A.* focuses on the universal spiritual solution, in the Twelve Steps. *R.A.* is therefore open to everyone who desires to be a member, no matter what their problems, or behaviors may be. This includes family and friends.

R.A.'s Fifth Tradition says that our primary purpose is to carry our message of recovery to those who still suffer. Our function as a support group is to help people to recover. We do this by helping them to work the Twelve Steps; the way the pioneers originally intended for us to work them.

To do this, we follow the pioneers' original "clear-cut directions" for working the Twelve Steps. These directions are easier to see in the Multilith Big Book. Therefore, we use it as our basic text. This is not the way most other fellowships work their programs.

R.A.'s Declaration of Ideals is the result of our years of working the Twelve Steps in this way. It lists The Twelve Ideals. Each Ideal defines the distinctive way we apply the spiritual principles that are in The Twelve Steps, The Twelve Traditions, and The Twelve Concepts.

Each *Ideal* is in two parts. First is a statement of fact, as *R.A.* understands it. Second is the action that results from that fact. The wording "for both the Fellowship and the individual" accents that each *Ideal* is something that, the Fellowship as a whole, and every individual member, needs to grow toward.

R.A.'s future lies in maintaining our distinctive nature. We trust that both our groups and our individual members will always recognize how important this is. If *R.A.* is to grow, we need to continue being there for those who want the recovery that we have found. We need to be able to give them our distinctive way of working the program, a way that is not readily available elsewhere.

R.A.'s

Declaration of Ideals

FOR BOTH THE FELLOWSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUAL

We strive, by God's grace, *both as a Fellowship and as individuals*, to always recognize that...

- 1— ...within *RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS* our common problem is a spiritual malady; therefore, implementing our common spiritual solution ultimately produces a trust in, and a reliance upon, an all-powerful, loving God.
- 2— ...*R.A.*'s Suggested Literature details and helps us to understand the specific course of action required for *permanent* recovery; therefore, our function is to guide each other to the resources in this Literature.
- 3— ...it is vitally important for each *R.A.* member to work with others; therefore, we encourage newcomers to immediately begin this essential spiritual activity.
- 4— ...the restoration of sanity comes as the result of working *all* Twelve Steps of the program; therefore, it is unrealistic for us to expect someone to behave sanely and normally, before they have implemented the entire program of recovery as detailed in *R.A.*'s Suggested Literature.
- 5— ...no matter what our problems or behaviors may be, they are just symptoms of our spiritual malady; therefore, we recommend that *R.A.* members read all of *R.A.*'s Suggested Literature as written.
- 6— ...the program should be free to work in all areas of our lives; therefore, within *R.A.*, we remove the specific labels from our problems and behaviors.
- 7— ...in our daily lives, what may be appropriate for one person may be inappropriate for another; therefore, within *RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS*, each member has the right to live

a spiritual life of their own understanding, as well as to define a sobriety, an abstinence, an emotional stability, etc., of their own understanding.

- 8— ...we should respect and protect the rights of each individual; therefore, within *R.A.*, each member has the right to comment without fear of being interrupted, personally criticized, or admonished.
- 9— ...we would obscure our focus on our common spiritual solution, if we divide into special interest groups; therefore, we need to maintain a single identity, with every *R.A.* Group and Meeting, open to equal participation by anyone who desires to be a member, including friends and family, no matter what their problems or behaviors may be.
- 10— ...since we need to place the welfare of others ahead of our own, *R.A.* is *not* a selfish program; therefore, we endeavor to develop a feeling of community, praying for direction and guidance in meeting each other's needs.
- 11— ...among ourselves, *R.A.* members do not need to be anonymous; therefore, we demonstrate our faith in God, and our commitment to each other, by using our full names within *R.A.* and at *R.A.* Meetings.
- 12— ...the term *recovered* is a positive affirmation of God's power to restore us to sanity; therefore, within *RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS*, we encourage the use of this term as a statement of hope as well as a statement of fact.

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The Twelve Steps

AS ADAPTED FOR RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS

- 1—We admitted we were powerless over our problems and behaviors—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2—Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3—Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
- 4—Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5—Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6—Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7—Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8—Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9—Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10—Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11—Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12—Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! I can’t go through with it.” Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection. Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:
 - (a) That we had a problem and could not manage our own lives.
 - (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our problems or behaviors.
 - (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

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The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

of Alcoholics Anonymous

- 1—We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2—Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3—Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
- 4—Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5—Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6—Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7—Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8—Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9—Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
- 10—Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11—Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12—Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

- 1—Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
- 2—For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
- 3—The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
- 4—Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
- 5—Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
- 6—An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7—Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8—Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9—A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10—Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11—Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
- 12—Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Traditions

AS ADAPTED FOR RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS

- 1—Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon R.A. unity.
- 2—For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
- 3—The only requirement for R.A. membership is a desire to recover.
- 4—Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or R.A. as a whole.
- 5—Each RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS group ought to be a spiritual entity *having but one primary purpose*—that of carrying its message to those who still suffer.
- 6—An R.A. Group ought never endorse, finance or lend the R.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
- 7—Every R.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
- 8—RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
- 9—R.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
- 10—RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS has no opinion on outside issues; hence the R.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
- 11—Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television, and other public media of communication.
- 12—Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

How To Reach R.A.

Recoveries Anonymous maintains a site on the World Wide Web. It is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

R.A.’s Web site contains detailed information about our Twelve Step program of recovery and our Fellowship. You can search for an R.A. meeting near you, and download copies of R.A.’s “How To Begin...” Guides as well as R.A.’s solution focused Books. You can also download R.A.’s Start A Group Kit, which contains all of the information needed to start an R.A. Group, and much, much more.

You can reach us on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.R-A.org>

You can also reach us by writing to:
**RECOVERIES ANONYMOUS
UNIVERSAL SERVICES**
P.O. Box 1212
East Northport, NY 11731

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*“There is
a solution.”*

The Big Book: Page 25